A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, August 14. 1708.

I Brought in my last the Duke of *Savoy* into the Field with an Army of 34000 Men, whereof 22000 Germans, and 12000 *Sedoyards* or *Piedmontois*.

The first I allow to be very good Troops, as any in *Europe*, the last a Parcel of Raree-Show-Men, or such like, that is to say, no Extraordinaries, not Men that we must expect will do any Wonders; tho' in such good Company as they are now join'd to, I know not but they may behave very well.

The *French* Army are commanded by the Mareschal *De Villars*, and by our former Accounts amount to 70 Battalions, and 300 Horse, not reckoning the Garrison of *Thoulon*, which consists now of 12 Battalions——with these Troops, which if compleat, are full as numerous as the Duke of *Savoy*'s Army, they are disposing themselves to act wholly on the Defensive Part. They fence and fortifie all the Passes of the Mountains, lie upon the advantageous Posts, under the Cannon of their Forts, and the like, and wait the Efforts of the Duke of *Savoy*, resolv'd to dispute every Inch of Ground with him, and if possible, to keep him from penetrating into *Dauphiné*, which seems to be their Design.

The Reason why I am so exactly stating the Strengths, the Prospect, and the Probabilities on both sides thus clearly is, that I may prevent the amusing our selves with Reports, and our own partial Re-

Repreſentations, and ſo when we come to the Iſſue, bluſh at our own Diſappointments again, as we have done lately in *Spain*.

The Duke of *Savoy* is a bold and enterprizing Prince, and that he is exaſperated againſt the *French* to the laſt Degree, we have no Reaſon to queſtion, when we remember what Extremities they brought him to, how they beſieg'd him in his Capital City, drove him to the Mountains of *Genoa*, and were within a Trifle of making themſelves Maſters of him, and of all his Dominions at once ——That he is A True Friend to the Intereſt, and ſincerely in the Intereſt of the New King of *Spain*, we have a new and perhaps unparallel'd Inſtance in his paying his Compliment to the Arch-Dutcheſs, now Queen of *Spain*, in Barr of the Title and Dignity of his own Daughter, who is marry'd to *Philip* V. and is now acknowledg'd for Queen of *Spain* at *Madrid*.

The Duke, I ſay, is therefore both bold and ſincere, I can make no doubt of either. —But when our forward News mongers tell us out of the plentiful Conjectures of their own Fancies—that he ſhall puſh into the Heart of *France*—that he ſhall do ſuch Wonders as have not been heard: Here he ſhall be at the Gates of *Lyons*, there he ſhall enter *Danphiné*; ——To day he ſhall ravage *France*, to morrow beſiege *Thoulon* a ſecond Time, and make the *French* Court very uneaſie about him——While I ſay, they cut out ſuch large Conqueſts for him with 34000 Men; I muſt ſay at the ſame time, wiſhing him all imaginable Succeſs, yet I cannot ſee Ground to promiſe our ſelves ſuch mighty Things.

If the Duke of *Savoy* recovers his own Country out of the Hands of the *French*, which he is, as we are now told, preparing to invade, and which is wholly in their Hands, I mean the Dutchy of *Savoy*; if he does this, it will be a very great Thing, I would compound with the *French* for ſo much Succeſs for him this Campaign—— and take it for a good Earneſt againſt the next Seaſon: But as for *Dauphiné*, the Gates of *Lyons*, *Thoulon*, &c. as our ſwaggering People talk of, unleſs he can draw the *French* to a Battle, and ſhould defeat them, a Thing, I fear, that Politick General *Villars* will not be brought to, but on Diſadvantages too great to wiſh it upon; I ſay, unleſs ſuch a Thing ſhould happen, I ſee no Ground for all the vain and oſtentatious Schemes laid by our printing Politicians.

I would therefore prepare them to diſcourſe with more Modeſty——It will be a large Step, and what I dare ſay, the Duke of *Savoy* would be very well content with, to ſee himſelf Maſter of his own Country this Summer—— And if he ſhould obtain that, as I hope he will, let us prepare to be very well ſatisfy'd and thankful. The Seaſon is late, the Armies have been long drawing together, and there is not Time for Abundance of Conqueſt, and where 35000 Men ſtand on the Defenſive againſt him, he muſt have very Good, if he make a great Progreſs.

Nothing can lay a good Foundation of Hope on that ſide, like another good Blow in *Flanders*, which ſhou'd make the *Fr.* ſend for more Troops from *Dauphiné* to defend the Heart of his Country; this would open a Door for the Duke of *Savoy* to break in like a Flood; 'tis here alone, I mean in *Flanders*, that the Hook is to be put into the Noſe of this mighty *Leviathan*, by which he will be brought down, and made to humble himſelf—— All the reſt is but Trifling, may wound but never mortally, and in one Winter he makes all whole again; but a Blow in *Flanders* is a Stabb near the Heart, makes the whole Body tremble, the whole Fabrick totter; will bring all the Blood to the Heart, all the Troops to the Center, and ſtruggling for Life leave him naked and expos'd to theſe remoter Enemies, to fall in and get a Share of the Spoil.

Patience therefore, and not expecting too much, is our only Way not to be diſappointed; and if the Duke of *Savoy* has but tollerable Succeſs, we ſhall be comforted in the Caſe; for nothing diſſatiſies us, makes us uneaſie, and look as if we were beaten, even when we conquer, like our deluded Expectations being carry'd beyond the Probabilities of a Rational Conjecture.

MIS-

MISCELLANEA.

DIſcourſing now of the Affairs of Religion in *Scotland*, I am come, in order from the Revolution and depoſing Epiſcopacy, to ſpeak of the Diſſenting Epiſcopal Miniſters there, whom, *I gave you my Reaſons for it*, I now call the *Jacobite Clergy*; and I am firſt to ſpeak of their Behaviour to the Government, in which I ſhall endeavour to be very cautious of injuring them, or any Body elſe.

The Church being Eſtabliſh'd, and all ſuch Miniſters as were in the Church, and would take the Oaths, remaining ſo, tho' *they were Epiſcopal*, as has been noted; the reſt, *diſſenting as above*, erected Meeting-Houſes and Societies in *Edinburgh*, and after in ſundry Parts of the Kingdom, where, *like as the Diſſenters in England*, they began to preach and pray, and exerciſe all the Functions of their Miniſtry, ſuch as to baptize, marry, adminiſter the Communion, and the like, having gather'd Congregations of Hearers, from whom they obtain'd Subſiſtence and Support in the Work.

The People of *Scotland* ſhew'd their Averſion to this on ſeveral Occaſions too long to relate, and ſeveral Times they were oblig'd to deſiſt in ſome Places, where they had attempted to ſet up Meeting-Houſes—but generally and eſpecially at *Edinburgh*———— But at her Majeſty's coming to the Crown, their Friends obtain'd a Letter from the Queen, to the Council, or to the Parliament, I cannot juſt now be poſitive which, whereby they were order'd not to diſturb or farther moleſt any for meer Diſſenting; but that while they behaved themſelves peaceably and dutifully to the Government, they ſhould alſo have the Protection of the Government in their Perſons and Eſtates, *&c.*

I am to tell you, that being at the Writing of this in the Country, where I cannot refer to the Originals, I cannot give you the exact Subſtance of the Queen's Letter, but I ſhall give you a true Copy of it in the Courſe of the Story.

What Her Majeſty underſtood by her ſaid Letter, is not for me to determine here; but the Gentlemen taking it for a tacit Toleration, began to take greater Liberties from it, than they did before, the Number of their Meeting-Houſes encreas'd both in *Edinburgh* and in other Places—— And two Things more, ſome ſay, were the Conſequence of the Encouragement, they took from this Letter.

1. That in their Meeting-Houſes they began more and more to conform themſelves to the Church of *England*, of whom it was ſaid, they would now call themſelves Members———— They were fain to do this very gradually, in Regard to the People who were their Hearers, who, tho' they were Epiſcopally inclin'd, yet they had never been us'd to the Ceremonies or Forms, which the Church of *England* practiſed in her publick Worſhip———However by Degrees, they advanc'd that way as far as they could; ſome began to read one Part of the *Engliſh* Service, ſome more, ſome went farther, and in a Chappel open'd at *Aberdeen*, they had the whole *Engliſh* Liturgy in full Uſe, with Organs alſo new ſet up, the firſt of that Kind, as I ſuppoſe, in *Scotland* for many Years.
2. In the *North* of *Scotland*, where the Gentlemen of their Party are more numerous, they went yet farther, and upon ſeveral Occaſions intruded by Force into the Churches which were vacant; in others the Rabbles affronted and maltreated the Presbyteries

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